

6 Here begynneth a

ppope treatyse of a marchauntes wyfe, that
afterwarde wente lyke a man and he
came a grete lorde, and was called
fredericke of Jemen.

Frederick of Jemen
K



The prologue.

Our lord god sayeth in the gospel. What measure ye mete withal, therewith shall ye be mete again. Addo your beynes ryghtfully and lustly ye shall haue a blessed and a good ende to yowre rewarde, & occupye your beynes bryghtfully & ye shall haue an yll rewarde therfore, as this story maketh mencio, but now a dayes every man gyue hym selfe to occupye deceytes and bryghtfulnes. But neuerthelesse at the laste cometh ryghtfulnes, & he that hath occupied that he shall haue for his rewarde euerylastyng blisse, as this lytell story sheweth of a fals marchaunte that deceyued another marchaunte with grete falsenelle & deceyte. But at the last for his falsenelle he was hanged and that was his rewarde for that false dede, as here after foloweth more playnely.



When foure marchauntes met al together in one waye
whiche were of foure diuers londes, and howe they
would e all to Paris.

In the yere of our lord god. M. CCC. xliii. It
happened that foure ryche marchauntes departed
out of diuers countreis for to do their marchaundise and
as they were goyng their iourneys by fortune they mette
all together and fel in company together, for thei were al
foure goyng towarde Paris in Fraunce & for company
sake they rode all into one ynn, & it was about wha-
tyd in the mooste toyfull tyme of al the yere and their na-
mes were called as here foloweth. The firste was called
Conrant of Spayne, the secod was called Bozcharde of
Fraunce, & thirde was called John of Fozenice, & the iiii.
was called Ambrose of Feinier. Then by the consent of
the other marchauntes Bozcharde of Fraunce went vnto
the hoste and sayd. Hoste now is the meriest tyme of the
yere and we be foure marchauntes of foure diuers coun-
treis & by fortune we met altogether in one place & oure
journey is to Paris. And therfore whyle we be so met let
vs make good chere together, & ordeine & best meet & ye
can get for money against to morowe and byd also some
of your best frendes that you loue mooste; that we maye
make good chere together or that we departe fro hence,
and we shall contente you all your money agayne. And
than the hoste sayd that he would do it with a good wil,
and than went he and bad many of his good frendes and
neighboures to diner, and he bought of the best meet that
he coude get for money and brought it home. And on the
morowe he dresse it and made it redy agaynst dyner af-
ter the best maner that he could. And wha & it was diner
a. ii.

tyme, than came in the gesses to dyner & the marchauntes
came to them and had them welcome. Than bad þ mar-
chauntes the hoste that he should byng in the meete and
lay the table that they myght go to dyner. And than the
hoste sayde, with a good wyll. Than went the hoste and
layd the table and fetched the meate and set it theron and
prayed the marchauntes to take the gesses to them and
syt downe together. And so they did & made good chere
all the daye longe with good honeste tyll that it was ve-
ry late with daunssyng and lepyng. And whan they had
doone, the gesses toke their leue of the marchauntes and
thanked them for their good chere. And than every man
depart ed home to his house. And than came the mar-
chauntes to the hoste and prayed hym hertely for to come
in, and thanked hym that he had ozdered and doone all
thynges so well and mannerly.



¶ Howe two of the marchauntes, as Johan of Florence
and Ambrosius of Jenuen hyde one another, & thou-
sande golde gyldens.

Whan all the marchauntes & the gesses had made
mery together al the day log, at nyght the gesses
toke their leue of the marchauntes, and thanked them
for theyr good chere that they had made them, and so de-
parted every one to their lodgng. And as they were de-
parted every man to their house, then wered it late. And
than came the hoste of the house to the marchauntes and
asked them if that they would go slepe, & they answered
vnto their hoste yes. And thā toke he a candell & brought
the marchauntes in to a fayre chambze, where was. iiii.
beddes richely hanged with costli curtaynes, that eue-
ry marchaunt myght lye by them selfe. And whan that
they were so altogether in the chābze, than began they to
speke of many thinges, some good, some bad as if laye in
their myndes. Than sayd Courant of Spayn. Sirs we
haue be all this day mery and made good chere & every
one of vs hath a fayre wyfe at home, how fare they now
at home we can not tell. Thā said Bourchard of Fraunce
to the other marchauntes. What aske you how they doe.
They sūt by the fyze and make good chere, and eate and
drynke of the beste and labour not at all, & so get they vn-
to them hote bloud & than they may take another lustye
yong man & doe their pleasure with him that we knowe
not of, for we be oftē tymes long from thē & for the cause
may they leen a lose for a nede secretly to another. Than
sayd Johan of Florence, we may all well be called fooles
and ydeotes that trust our wiues in this maner as we do
for a womans hert is not made of so harde a stone but ꝑ
Fredericke of Jenuen, A. iij.

it wylle melle, for a womans nature is to be bittedfast & tourneth as the wynde dooeth and careth not for vs tyll the time that we come agayn. And we labour dayly both in wynde and in raine and put often our liues in iopardy and in aventure on the sea for to fynde them withall & our wyues syt at home and make good chere with other good felowes, & geue the parte of the money that we get. And therfore and ye wylle do after my counseyl, let euery one of vs take a faire wenche to pas the time withall as wel as our wyues do, & they shall knowe no more of that than we knowe of them. Than saide Ambrosius of Jenuen to them. By goddes grace that shalt I neuer dooe whyle that I lyue. For I haue at home a good & a vertuous woman and a womaly. And I know wel that she is not of that disposition, but that she will eschewe her of all suche yllabusions till the tyme that I come home agayne, for I knowe wel that she wil haue none other man but me alone. And if that I should breake my wedlocke than were I but litle worthe. Than sayde John of Florence. felowe ye set muche price by your wyfe at home & trust her with all that ye haue I wil lye with you a wagger of fyue thousande gyldens if that ye will abyde me here I shall departe and ryde to Jenuen and dooe with your wyfe my wyll. Than sayd Ambrosius to John of Florence. I haue deliuered to myne hoste fyue thousand gyldens to kepe, put ye downe as muche againste it and I shall tary here tyll the tyme that ye retourne agayne from Jenuen, and if that you by any maner of meanes can get your pleasure of my wyfe ye shall haue all this money. Than sayde Johan of Florence. I am contente, and than putte he in his hostes hande other fyue thousande gyldens agaynst Ambrosius money. And than tooke he

his leue & departed towarde Jemen. And as he rode
thider warde he thought in his mynde by what ma-
ner of wyse y he myght come best to speke with Amb-
roses wyse that he myghte haue his pleasure of her
& wyne the money that he had layde with Ambrose
to a wager, whether it were by ryght or by wrong.
And at the laste he had rode so long that he came to
Jennen where that Ambrose wyse dwelte.



How that Johan of Florence was come to Jemen
for to speke to Ambroses wyse & when that he came
in her presence for to speke to her he durste not bicau-
se that he founde her so womanly in her behauiour.

Add tohan that Iohan of florence was come
to Jennen, he wente walkyng al aboute to se
yf that he coude spy Ambrosius wyfe. And as he was
walkyng came Ambrosius wyfe to chyrche, so that
Iohan behelde her & spake toher, and had her good
morrow. And she thanked hym and gaue vnto him a
gayne sweete wordes & womanly behauoure, so that
he was a shamed and sayd to hym selfe. Alas poore
wretche that I am, what haue I done, the money is
lost I se it wel. For she semeth a worthyfull woman
and I dare not speke to her of that bylany wherof I
am soyr. And as he walked thus he thought in hys
mynde that yf that he shold wyne y money he must
nedes come in toher chambze. And than made he a
chest that he wolde haue conueyd in to the womans
chambze and he wost not how. Than remembred he
him and sayd, I haue herde saye that the dyuell can
not do that an olde womā can do, and he thought to
proue it. And than went he to the olde clothe marked
where he foude an olde womā that solde olde clothes
which he thought best for him. But he sayd, how shal
I speke beste to her to shewe my mynde.

CHow Iohan of florence gaue vnto the woman a
cote of sylke for to sell.





Than broughte John of Florence with him a cote
of sylke and came to the olde woman and sayd yf
that ye coude sel this cote I shold gyue you a good drin-
kyngge penny for it is al to hely for me. The womā saide
to hym. How wyll you sel your sylken cote, than answe-
red he yf that ye may sel it for .ii. ducates let it goo. But
the cote was well worth seven ducates. Than was the
olde woman glad in her mynde and bad y he shold come
Fredericke of Tennen.

B.i.

agayne the morowe after and he sholde haue his monye
and she sayd to her selfe, this is my marchaunt. And thā
departed he home and on the nexte daye in the mornynge
came Johan of florence to the olde woman againe and
she gaue vnto hym the. ii. ducates and she tolde him that
she coude haue no more, but she kepte the cote tocher selfe
And than Johan of florence receyued the two ducates
of the olde womā and thanked her. And thā he cast dow-
ne one of the ducates to her and said vnto her. Take that
& fetch the best meet & drynke y^e ye can get. For we two
must make good chere or that we departe, & that dyd he
for to make the woman dronken y^e he myghte haue some
good counseile of her for to come in to Ambroses hous, &
at dyner tyme came Johan of florence to dyne with the
olde woman & there he made good chere and gaue vnto
the olde woman soo moche wyne that she began to were
mery. And that seynge Johan of florence sayd to y^e olde
wyfe y^e was worsler thā the deuyll. Knowe ye not a mar-
chaunt that is called Ambrose, & the olde womā answe-
red yes I know hym wel he is not at home, but he hath
here a fayre woman to his wyfe dwellynge, that is bothe
pouge & woorthypfull of behauioure, curteysie in answe-
rentyl, not proude, good for to speke withall. Than sayd
Johan of florence knowe ye not the way y^e ye myght co-
uay a chest in to her hous, & I my selfe wil thyept me ther
in. And whan that the chest hath stande in her hous by y^e
space of. iii. daies thā come & fetch the y^e chest home againe,
& yf that ye can do it I shal gyue vnto you. CC. ducates
for your labour with a better drynkyng peny. Thā was
the olde woman glad wth that profer & sayde vnto hym O
my frende forowe not for that thyng, byynge the chest
in to my hous and thyt you fast therein and I shal fynde

suche wayes that the cheste shall be conueyed in to her house. Than was John of Florence glad and did as the olde woman bad him and fetched the cheste and brought it in to her house and put him selfe therein.

How that the olde woman desyred Ambroses wyfe to kepe a cheste in her house till the tyme that she come from saynt James.

After that John of Florence had promysed to the olde woman the. CC. ducates he woulde se fyrste that she sholderne the before y she shold haue them. And the olde woman sought and ymagined many fallenes to haue the money. Than went she to Ambroses wyfe with a false herte and greted her, and louyngly thanked her & bad her welcome to her. For she semed to her for to bee a good honest woman, but she was but a dissimeler of cloked falshede, for it is a commyn sayng of people that an olde woman can do that the deuell hym selfe can not do, as we haue in examples moze playnely thereof in many diuerse bokes, and as this litle boke maketh mencion. Than whan the olde woman had talked a good while w Ambroses wise of many diuers matters. Than sayde she to her. Maistres, my compug to you at this tyme is for this cause. I did howe a pilgrimage a longe tyme to the holy apostle saint James, and notue take I iorney & if it please you to sende any offring thither. I shal bere it with a good will. And than thanked Ambroses wyfe her and gaue vnto her a ducate and said that she should offre that ducate to saynt James to saue her husbände from the perill of the sea & sodayne death. Than toke y olde woman the ducate and sayd worthyppful maistres I desire you of
(one thyng. I haue a

cheste here that all my Jewels ben in and all my chefe
 plates, and I would desyre you to kepe it in youre house,
 tyll the tyme that I come home to you agayn. For ye be
 the woman that I truste and beleue aboue all other wo-
 men now beyng alpye. Than said Ambroses wife, that
 wyll I do with a good will, & I shall set it sure inough.
 For I will set it in my chamber that it may be the surer
 kept. Than was the olde woman glad in her mynde, and
 thanked her and departed homewarde for the cheste.



Howe John of Florence was in the cheste and howe
 he was brought into Ambroses house.

AND whā this false olde womā hadde ordeyned all
 thynges after her minde and knewe that Ambro-
 ses wife wolde take the cheste into her house, than wente

he and put John of florence in the cheste secretly that
no body wylde therof and gaue hym in the cheste meate
and drinke for thre or foure daies, soo that he neded no
thyng. And the cheste was made with a spyng locke,
so that John of florence myght open and shutte in what
that he woulde at his pleasure. And than did the olde wo-
man laye the chest vpon a whelebarowe and gate twoo
stronge men to cary it to Ambroses house. And whan
they were come there with the chest, the olde womā came
to Ambroses wyfe and tolde her that she had the chest at
the doze. And than Ambroses wyfe had her bryng the
cheste in, and set it in her owne chambze thynkryng of no
decepte nor falshede. Than went the olde woman to the
doze and hade the two men-bryng in the cheste and bere
it vp in to the chambze, and so they dyd. And than whan
it was in the chambze, than she payed the men and they
departed from thence. And than tooke the olde woman
leue of Ambroses wyfe, and so departed homewarde very
glad and mery.

How John of florence opened the chest in the
nyght and came out into Ambroses chābze and
stale. iii. Jewels.

Frederyke of Iennen. B. iii.



Whan nyght came that euery body was a slepe in their first slepe & at reſte, than did John open the cheſt and went out in to the chamber. And by miſfortune Ambroſes wiſfe had left her coſer open wherem ſ Jewels were, & had forgot to wytte it. And that ſpied wel ſ falſe John of Florence, & theyr he ſtale three coſtly Jewelles. The one was a purſe wrought al with perles and coſtly ſtones, beyng worth. lxxiiii. ducates, and the other was a gyrdle of ſyne golde ſet with coſtly perles and ſtoones that was worth. CCCC. ducates. And the thyrde was a ryng with a point of diamond that was worth. l. ducates. And the moone ſhone ſo clere that he myght ſee in euery corner of the chamber, and there he behelde Ambroſes wiſfe that was ſoundely a ſlepe. And than it fortun- ned that her leſte arme lay on the bed, & on that arme ſhe had a blacke warte that the falſe traitoure John of Flo-

rence sawe well, wherwith he reioysed and sayd, O good
lorde what great fortune haue I. For now haue I sene a
pyppur token, wherby he shall byleue me that I haue had
my pleasure of his wyfe, and so shall I haue the money
of hym. Than wente the fals these with the Jewelles
agayne in to the chest and thyt hym self fast therein. And
on the thyrde day after came the olde woman to Ambro-
ses wyfe & gaue to her agayne the ducate that she holde
haue bozne to saynt James & sayde, Worshypfull may-
strys I haue gote a grete sekeneis, that I wene wyl tary
longe by me. And therfore I wel not take this. For maye
on me this pere. And therfore I praye you p I myghte
haue my chesse agayne, & I thanke you hertely of youre
good wyll. Than deliuered Ambroses wyfe the chesse
to p olde woman, mystrustynge nothyng & knewe not p
therof shoulde come ony heynnes. And than departed the
olde womā home to the chest agayne. And whan it was
in p olde womans hous than opened Johan of florence
the chest and came out, and than he gaue to the olde wo-
man. CC. ducates for her labour and toke his leue of
her & rode to Parys, where that Ambrose tarped hym.
And whan that he was come to Parys than rode he in
to the ynne where that Ambrose was. And than set he
bp his horse and came to Ambrose & called hym a syde &
sayde, bycause that ye be a good frende of myne, and we
haue kepte company toggyder, and that ye holde not be
a shamed I call you asyde, for to shewe vnto you that I
haue wonne the money. Se, here I haue euidente to-
kens for to shewe that I haue wonne it. And than toke
Johan of florence outte the purse, the gyrdell, and the
rynge, and shewed those thze Jeweles vnto Ambrose.
Than sayd Ambrose, I knowe well p those thze Jeweles

be my wyues, but yet I wyll not beleue y^e ye haue hadde
your wyl on her. But ye must tel me sone better and pry-
uer token than these be. And than sayd Iohan, ye wyll
beleue me and I tel vnto you a moze prouer token than
these be. Than he tolde vnto Ambrose that his wyfe had
vpon her lefte arme a blacke wart. And whā y^e Ambrose
herde that than fel he in a sobonde. For he knewe not the
falsenes of Iohan. Than Iohan toke Ambrose vp and
bad hym take a mans herte vnto hym and let it passe, for
he coude not therewith amende it. And whan that Am-
brose was vp agayne, than he sayde. Alas what is my
fortune, I had went that my wyfe wolde neuer hane de-
ceyued me as she hath done, for she was bothe worthyp-
full and vertuous and beloued bothe of yonge and olde.
And than bad Ambrose Iohan of Florece that he shoulde
tel it no ferther to any bodye, and badde him goo to the
holste and fetch the money, and so he dyde. And there
was no man, but he and Ambrose that knewe who had
wonne the money.

E Now Ambrose rode home agayne towarde
the towne of Jennen.



come to hym there, & tohan þ she was come that he shold
 see her and burpe her in the sonde. Than sayde the ser-
 uant to his mayster, that were grete ppy. Than sayd
 Ambrose, if ye do it not I shall see you. Than sayde the
 seruaunte. I wyll, for he thoughte it was better to see
 his maysters than his selfe to be slayne. And than depar-
 ted he toward his maysters with a forowfull herte.



C How the man wente to the towne.

A As the man was come to the towne he came
 to his maysters & tolde her þ her husbände was
 come & tarped her at his house without the towne, Than
 was Ambroses wyfe glad & wente with þ man and car-
 ried w her a lptell lambe þ she was wonte to play with

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all. And whan they came without the towne in the wood,
than saide the seruauant to his maistres. O good may-
stres, my maister hath charged me vpon payne of death
that I should see you here and bryng to hym for a token
your tongue and a locke of your heere. And whan she
herde that she fell downe on her knees and sayde, I haue
neuer offended him for to dye, and therefore good lady de-
lyuer me from this daunger as I am gyltlesse. And as
soone as she had done her prayer she sayde to the man.

My true seruauant, I shall geue you good counseyle. I
haue a lambe here we shall kyll it and take his tongue, &
I wyll cut a locke of my heere, and with the bloud anoynt
my clothes and bere these tokens to your maister. And
than sayde the seruauant to his maistres, that shall I doe
with a good wil, but ye must departe from hence that my
maister se you not. For if he doe, than shall we bothe lese
our lyues. And than departed she, and than kylde he the
lambe and did as she bad him and bare the tokens to his
maister. And whan Ambrose sawe theim, than was he
more sorier than he was before because that he spake not
with her before that he caused her to be put to death, to ex-
ampte her wherefore John of Florente had the Jewels.
And the man seing howe his maister that he founde no
faulte with the tokens. He thanked God and our lady of
the good counsaile of the woman.

**Howe Ambroses wyfe came in mans clo-
thing to Secant.**

Frederike.

C.H.



Than clothed Ambroses wyse her selfe in mā's clo-
 thyng and came to Secant to an haven, where
 she found a shyppe redy to goe. Than desired she that she
 might go with it. And than asked the shypman what is
 your name: and he answered hym. Frederike is my
 name, and I haue had a greate losse bothe of my frendes
 and my goodes, so that I am vndone. Than sayde the
 shypman, ye be a propre man, wil ye serue me for I haue
 here hawkes that I must bring to the kynge of Alkare,
 that shall ye kepe and I wil geue vnto you good wages.
 Than sayd Frederike, with a good wyll. And than toke
 they their passage and came ouer and presented the kynge
 the hawkes, and he rewarded them well. And as soone

as frederike was departed, than began the haukes to
drome; than was the kynge angry and sente for the thyp-
man and asked him what haukes he had broughte. We
had you byng of the beste; and see what haukes ye haue
brought. Than sayde the thypman, whan that I hadde
them in the thyppe they were fayre and good, as anye
man myght see. And I hyred a propre man that came to
me by fortune that kepte them diligently and for that
cause they mozne. Than sayd the kynge. Byng to me the
man and let me se hym. Than sayde the thypman. My
lege I will fetche him. But if it please your grace I am
lothe to departe with hym. For he is bothe wise and sub-
tyll in many causes. And if youre grace haue hym, ye
muste kepe hym that no persone do to hym wrong. Than
sayde the kyng. Sooe fetche hym hether and we promise
you that no man soo hardy of his head shall dooe hym
wronge. And than toke the thypman leue of the kynge
and so departed.

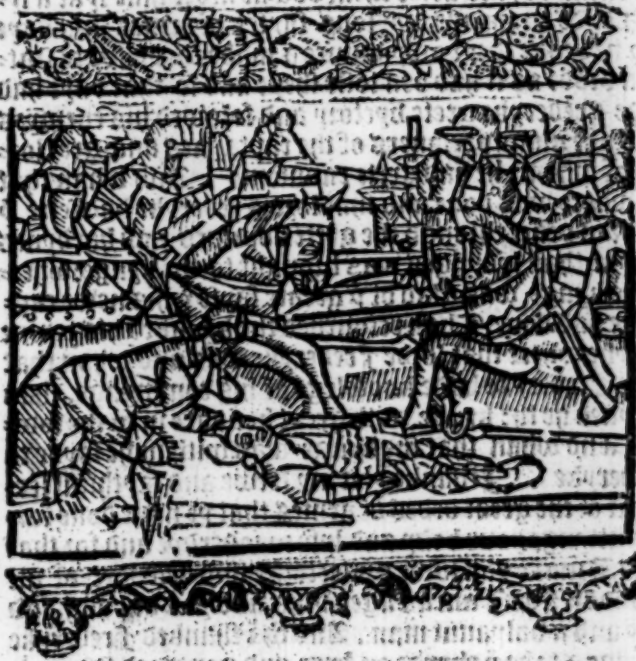
**Howe frederike was the kynge of
Alsaes sauer.**





Than was the kyng very soze for his haukes for
he went that they would haue dyed. And whan
frederike was come befoze the kyng and sawe hym, than
had he a great fauoure vnto him and brought him to his
haukes, and as sone as the haukes sawe him they reioy-
sed and flapped with their wynges & were hole, wherof
kyng was glad and meruayled grethly therat. And than
gaue he frederike charge of his haukes & he kept them
well, so that the kyng loued him wel & promoted him and
made him a gret offyce in his court & after that a knight
and than he made him a lord. Than in the meane tyme
befel in the towne a great death so that the kyng wold de-

parte from thence. Than as he departed he called to him
 lord Frederyke and made hym lord defender of all his
 londe, tyll the tyme that he retourned agayne whan that
 dethe were paste. And than dyd the kynge and all his
 lordes take theyr leue of lord Frederyke, and departed
 fro thence.



Thove Frederyke overcame the kynges enemyes
 that brenned and destroyed many townes after the de-
 partynge of the kynge.

Whan as the kynge and his lordes were departed
than had his enemyes knowlege that he was de-
parted, & came with a grete hoste and brente, & slewe, and
toke many pysoners. And at þ last this tydynge came
to frederyke that was lord & defender of the kynges re-
alme. Than assembled he a grete hoost and cam agaynst
his enemyes, and slewe them downe afore him lyke a ly-
on & dyde many meruaylous saytes of armes that daye
for he broke theyr ordynauce & made them for to scat-
ter a brode as it had ben losse thepe and so that daye had
lorde frederyke grete byctory and solowed his enemyes
and toke many pysoners of the captaynes and grete lord-
des of whome he had grete raunsome. And whan that
the warre was done and that lord frederyke had sette þ
londe in peare through the grete boldenes and hardynes
of hym, than tydynge was brought to the kynge, wher-
of the kynge was glad of þ grete sayte þ his newe cap-
tayne had done. Than returned the kynge to his towne
agayne wher that lord frederyke was and whan that
lord frederyke hade knowlege of his comynge, than
receyued he the kynge with great honoure in to the tow-
ne. And whan that the kynge was with in he sayde to
frederyke. I thanke you my trewe and fapthfull ser-
uaunt of the great dedes of armes that ye haue done for
me puttynge your body and lyfe in ioperdye and for that
cause I make you lord protector and defender of all
my londe. For I am an aged man, and you be yong and
lusty and a valyaunt man. And thā thanked frederyke
þ kynge & toke þ charge on hym, and gouerned the real-
me worthily so that al þ lordes & knyghtes loved him
wel and al the commons. And he reigned .xii. yere w grete
honoure and dayly gettyng more thereto.



How Johan of florence came to Alkaren with
marchaundysle.

Upon a tyme wente Johan of florence to the see
wyth his marchaundysle þ was but lyght passa-
ge toward þ toborne of Alkare. for he coude speke many
dyuerse languages. And whan he was come to Alkare
he wente to þ kynges palayce & shewed his marchaundy-
se. Thanne on a daye as lord frederike and his lordes
walked aboute, lord frederike sawe the marchaunte
standynge with his marchaundysle. Than wente he wyth
his lordes to Johan of florence. And whan he was come
he loked asyde and sawe the gyrdle, þ purse, & the ryng,
whiche he knewe well Inough, and sayd. Marchaunt
let me se those thre costely Jewels þ ye haue there & shew
frederike of Jennen.

D.i.

toe me I pray you in what londe ye bought them. Than
sayd Johan of florence. I bought them not, but yf ye
wylste how daungerously I came by them, ye wolde lo-
ue me the better euer after. Than sayd lorde frederyke,
that grete daunger muste ye tell me. Than tolde Johan
of florence to lorde frederyke howe y he came by them,
& howe that he layd. v. thousande geldens with Ambro-
se that he sholde haue gotten his pleasure of his wyfe and
howe that he gate the Jewels vnknownen to his wyfe, &
than retourned I to her husbände and tolde hym that I
had wonne the money and than retourned he home and
caused his man for to see her (as is before shewed moze
playnly). Than sayd lorde frederyke, the sleynge of hys
wyfe was yll done, but y money was gotten with a won-
der grete practyse and well, but for all that lorde fredere-
ryke spake so, yet he thought not soo. Than said he to the
marchaunte, wyl ye tary with vs here and we shall gy-
ue vnto you mete and drynke out of my court, & kepe tho-
se Jewelles that ye haue here for me, for they please me
wonderly well, & now we haue I no leasure to gyue to you
the money at this time. For they be so costly that the ma-
ney wyl be longe a tellynge, & they that serue for my pa-
ramoure. Than thaked Johan of florence lorde fredere-
ryke that he was so curtyse to him, and sayd. These thre
Jewelles be so costly & of so hyghe a pryce to gyue to his
paramoure wout y he loued her very well. And than de-
parted lorde frederyke fro the marchaunt & charged his
officers that they sholde gyue vnto the marchaunte his
lyuery for two or thre men euery daye. And they sayde,
they wolde with a good wyll. So on the morowe came
Johan of florence for his lyuery and they gaue it vnto
hym, so that he neded not for too spende but yf he wolde

Thā pyuely called lorde frederyke a poste and asked of hym yf that he knewe wel where that the towne of Jennen was. And he answered, yes lorde I knowe it well. Than sayd lorde frederyke, thyder must ye as faste as ye may go, & there is money ynoughe. And whan ye bee there than aske for one Ambrose a weddower, & whā that ye speke w hym delyuer vnto hym this letter, & brynge hym with you. And this lettter was wryten as though the kynge hym selfe had sende it.



How the poste or messenger delyuered the letter to Ambrose.

Through the commaundement of lorde frederike departed the messengere towarde Jennen, & passed ouer the see and at the laste came to Jennen, & whan

that he was there, he asked where þ Ambrose dwelte, & he asked so longe þ at the last he came to him & presented the letter to hym wth the kynges b^{ro}de seale, and he receyued it humbly and opened it. And this was the tenoure as here foloweth. We kyng of Alkaren desyre of oure frende Ambrose for a nedeful cause that we haue to doo, which shall be a grete profyt vnto you wherwith ye shal be made ryche, so þ ye wolde spede you & come with this messenger to vs and ye shal haue no maner of harme done to you, for we send to you oure b^{ro}de seale and Safescoundute bothe to goo and to come fre. And as Ambrose reed this letter he wondered gretly of þ hasty desyre of þ kyng. Neuerthelesse he dressed his gere & set one in his hous tokepe it tyll the tyme þ he retourned agayne. And than departed he with the messenger. And they passed ouer the see & came to lord Frederyke that had him wel come & made him good chere, & on þ morowe came lord Frederyke to Ambrose and made hym come to dyner wth hym. And he his owne persone toke & set hym at þ kynges owne table & set hym selfe downe therby, & ostentymes in the dyner he had that Ambrose sholde be mery, & whan dyner was done than sayd lord Frederyke to the king. My lege here is come to this towne a marchaunte that hath broughte thre costely Jewelles whiche that I wolde þ ye had sene, and therfore wyll I sende for hym and byd hym brynge his thre Jewelles with hym. And than wente a messenger and bad Johan of Flozence þ he sholde make hym redy and come before the kyng wth his thre Jewels. Than was Johan of Flozence glad & thought þ he sholde haue receyued moche money & went wth the messenger to the kyng in to the halle. And whan he was come, lord Frederyke sayde vnto hym. Syr

shewe your marchaundysse & shewe howe that ye came by
them to the kyng. Than sheweth he the thre Jewels, and
than Ambrose seyng the Jewels, wondrously and wente
than that the kyng had sent for hym to put him to death
and than fel he for sorowe almoste to the grounde. This
markyng lord Frederyke came and comforted hym and
clapped him on the sholder and sayde he shoulde haue no
harne, but Joye. Than tolde the marchaunt to the king
altogether howe that he had gotten the Jewels. Than
went the lord Frederyke with the kyng asyde and asked
the kyng what that marchaunt had deserued that hadde
dishonoured suche a worshipfull woman and had begy-
led her in that maner of her Jewels, and after that losse
her lyfe therfore. Than saide the kyng to the lord Frede-
ryke: He hath bothe deserued the whele and the galowes.
for he caused both murder to be done, and also he stoule
the Jewels. Than sayde lord Frederyke so thynketh me
also that he hath deserued it well for to be his rewarde.
But if that it please your grace and the lordes to returne
again into the hall, ye shall see and knowe many other
marueylous thinges that that false marchaunt hath done
to that worshipfull woman. Than sayde the kyng, with
a good wyll that shall we do. Than retourned the kyng
and all his lordes with lord Frederyke into the hall a-
gayne, for to here moze of the marchaunte.

**Howe lord Frederyke came naked before
the kyng and his lordes.**

Frederyke of Iennen.

D.iii.



With those wordes tourned the king into the hall where he and his lordes spake of manye dyuerse straunge matters, and in the meane whyle went the lord Frederyke secretly away, & came into the chamber where she did vnclothe her al naked saving a clothe before her membris, & than came into the hall, before the kyng and al his lordes, & before all the other persones there beyng present all naked, saue that she had a kercher of sylke before her membris. And whan she was come in she wente to the kyng and dyd him reuerence. And whan the kyng and his lordes sawe her, they meruayled greatly, wherefore that that sayre woman came in naked before them. Than saide the kyng to his lordes, that persone haue I sene before oftentimes in other araymēt than she is now and if I should tell trewe, me thynketh it is our protector and defender lord Frederyke. And therfore sayd the

kyng to her shew to vs what ye be, and wherfore that ye
come in here befoze vs al naked in this maner. Than an-
swered the woman to the kyng and saide. I am the same
persone lord Frederike that you spake on, your pooze sub-
iecte. And I am here come befoze your great maieste to
complaine on this false marchaunt that standeth here w-
th the thre Jewels that be myne, as the purse, the gyrdle, &
the rynge, that he had gotten by thefte whiche is openly
knowe befoze your grace by what maner of craft he came
by them, & this other marchaunt that here standeth befoze
you is my husbände, and I my selfe is the same woman
that shoulde haue be put to death in the wood at the same
tyme, but I escaped by the helpe of God and oure ladye
from that great perill of death, and from that day to this
day I neuer had conuersacion with any man, but haue
liued chaste, and no man nor woman knewe neuer none
other but that I was a man and therfore if that it please
your grace to do so much for me that this false marchaunt
and traitour may suffre death as ye knowe well that he
hath deserued and none other wise. Than said þ kyng to
her, that must I nedes do for right and reason wil desire
none other, and therfore for that yll dede that he hath
done we wil that he be headed, and than after that his bo-
dy to be layde vpon the whele, ouer him a paire of galo-
wes, because that he hath stolen, and also caused murder
to be done and therfore take him by and by. Than was
John of florence taken and broughte to prysen and all
his goodes giuen to Ambrose and his wyfe. Than sayde
Ambrose to John of florence, O pooze wretche & katyf,
what helpeth you now al your craft & falschod and al that
yll gotten goods that ye haue gotten by falschod and theft,
for now at the last is your traytership & false dede open-

ly knowen. And nowe therfore must ye suffre a shamefull death, and that shall be your rewarde, better ye had bene to haue done right and than ye had not come to that ye be at. Than aunswered John of Florence, that is truth. I haue well deserued my death. Than toke the officers John of Florence and brought hym besyde of the galowes where the Justice should be done. And whan that he had made his prayers and all doone, than made the hangman him knele downe, and smote Johans of Florence head of, and after that laied his body vpon a whele and the head he stycked on a stake and set it by, ouer the head a galowes all after the maner as the kyng had iudged him, and than retourned home againe. And in this maner was John of Florence serued for his great falshed and theste that he hadde done to that tretwe wyfe and mayde. For it is neuer seene yet that murdre and theste was neuer so long kept, but at laste it is knowen. And they that dooe it at the laste be hanged, or elles they suffre some other shamefull death.

CHowe Ambroses wyfe toke leue of the byng and departed towarde home with her husbände.





AD whan that Ambrose had sene that lorde Fre-
deryke was his wyfe, he meruayled gretly ther-
at and wened þ he hadde ben deed longe agone. Neuer-
thelesse he was ryght heuy for the grette wronge that he
had caused to be done to her in tyme past, and than wen-
he to her and toke her in his armes and kyssed her. And
whan he had done he fell before her on his knees & asked
her forgyuenes for that grette wronge that he had doone
to her so hastely not spekyng to her before. Than dydde
she take hym vp and sayd to hym. Be contente my good
loue, I forgyue you frely as thoughe you had neuer do-
ne it. And than he rose and thanked her & thought in his
mynde not for to tary longe there, neuerthelesse þ kynge
Frederyke of Iennen.

C.i.

made them bothe good chere and gaue vnto them ma-
ny grete gyftes bothe to Ambrose & his wyfe also, for he
loued her for the grete trueth & valyaunce y she had do-
ne for hym in his absence, puttynge her lyfe in ieopardy
for hym agaynst his ennemyes. And whan she had ben
a whyle with the kynge and made good chere, tha came
she to the kynge & prayed hym of lycence that she myght
departe home ward to her husbnde. And whan y kynge
herde that she wolde departe fro thens he was sorz and
was lothe for to let her departe frome thense, but she de-
syred so moche y at the laste he gaue to her lycence and
saufcoundute y they myght passe throughe all his londe
without ony maner of harme oz agayne sayenge. Than
was Ambrose and his wyfe glad and toke theyr leue of
the kynge and wente theyr way & came to the see & toke
a shyp and passed ouer the see to Jermen and hadde good
passage & whan they were come they were receyued and
met of the people whan they sawe that Ambroses wyfe
was come agayne, y was sayde longe befoze to be dede
they meruayled gretly therof. And after that lyued they
longe in vertue and goodnes & loued euer after togyder
& thanked god of that grete fortune that they had & ser-
ued god deuoutely. And after that had Ambrose by hys
wyfe foure chyl dren, that is to vnderstande. iii. sonnes &
a doughter. And the eldest sone was named. Frederyke
after the name of his moder. And whan that he began to
were grete and myghty, than was he sente to Alkaren
to the yong kynges court the sone of the olde kynge that
his mother had dwelte withal befoze, and he was made
moch of for that y his moder had done befoze to the olde
kyng, & gate worshyp dayly more and more for his mo-
thers sake, & became a gret lord & was well beloued of y

kyng and all his lordes and all the kynrede of them euer
after came to great worshyp and honour. And than whā
that Ambrose and his wyfe sawe that their sonne was
so muche made of, than toke they their lese of the kyng
of Alkare and than departed towarde the towne of Jen-
nen, and came therein the. viii. day of January, whiche
was ypon a sonday. In the yere of our Lorde God. M.
CCCC. and. xxxvii. And thus in this maner hathe this
good marchaunt Ambrose and his wyfe lyued together,
and these fortunes they haue suffered. And than was Am-
brose's wife seke and died, and commended her soule into
the handes of almyghty God, and went to the blisse euer-
lastyng, to the whiche blisse God byng you & me. Amen.

And thus endeth this lytell stozy of
lorde frederyke.

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